



Factory Kings & Slaves



by John Hargreaves



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Factory Kings & Slaves...

one of a range of booklets, maps and displays being produced by Pennine Heritage Network to encourage understanding and respect for the intricate web which makes up the Pennine story: its landscape, industry and people.

The publications are based on four themes — Man and the Landscape, Transport, Textiles and Social Movements — each with an introductory leaflet and individual booklets featuring different periods of development.

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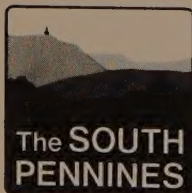
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Pennine Heritage Network

The Birchcliffe Centre,
Hebden Bridge, HX7 8DG



ISBN 0 907613 04 7

The Pennine Heritage Network produces publications, displays, residential courses and events: it works, in partnership with individuals, societies and local authorities to encourage people to understand and respect the intricate web which makes up the Pennine story.

Established with help from the Carnegie UK Trust and the Countryside Commission, the Pennine Heritage Network forms a part of Pennine Heritage, a charitable trust engaged in an ambitious programme of action to encourage the social and economic regeneration of the area.

Factory Kings and Slaves:

South Pennine Social Movements, 1780—1840

Introduction

The sixty years from 1780 to 1840 were formative years in the development of the communities of the South Pennines. They were years of industrial adolescence, when changes in methods of production, which were eventually to revolutionise the working lives of many Pennine families, were accelerated. These changes from traditional crafts performed in the home or small workshop to large-scale factory production occurred at varying rates in the different textile industries and were by no means complete in every industry by 1840. Handloom woollen weaving, for instance, survived as a cottage industry at least to the end of the nineteenth century.

Nevertheless, these were painful years for the declining hand crafts some of which, like cropping, had disappeared altogether by 1840. Conditions were aggravated by food shortages, following poor harvests, and by the dislocation of the economy as a result of war. Britain was at war for just over a third of the period 1780-1840, first with the rebel American colonists and their allies in the War of American Independence (1775-83); then with Revolutionary and Napoleonic France (1793-1802; 1803-15); and again with the United States in the Anglo-American War of 1812-14. It is not surprising, therefore that two distinctive monuments to peace should have been erected in the South Pennines during this time, one at Holmfirth to commemorate the short-lived

Peace of Amiens of 1802-03 and the other on Stoodley Pike, to commemorate the end of the Napoleonic Wars.

Revolution abroad contributed to a ferment of ideas at home, nowhere more vigorously discussed than in the cottages and chapels, factories and workshops, inns and institutes of the South Pennines, which, with the sporadic industrial protests, produced years of anxiety for those who had responsibility for the maintenance of public order. These were, in many respects, turbulent years, when attacks were made or mooted not only on machinery and mills, but also on grain warehouses, workhouses, barracks, prisons, the military and the police.

However, not all machinery was resisted, nor were all the energies of the working classes absorbed in rioting and protest. These were also years of evangelical revival, which generated a concern for the quality of life in factories and gave an impetus to the development of popular education, and of a growth in the notion of self-help, epitomised in the growth of friendly societies, early co-operative schemes and trade unionism, as a defence against the new political economy of laissez-faire.

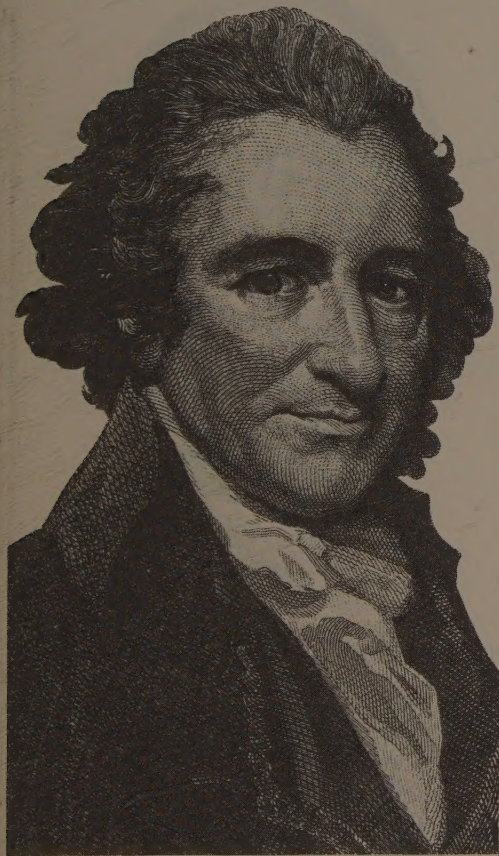
One idea which kept recurring in the radical speeches and literature of the period was the notion of the free-born Englishman, which had its roots deep in the English radical tradition. In the wake of the successful evangelical crusade against the slave trade and the continuing campaign to end British colonial slavery, Tory Radicals like William Cobbett and later Richard Oastler claimed that they had discovered new conditions of slavery in the manufacturing districts of Lancashire and Yorkshire. William Cobbett wrote in his *Political Register* in November 1824:

'It is to be a despicable hypocrite, to pretend to believe that the slaves in the West Indies are not better off than the slaves in these manufactories . . . Some of these lords of the loom have in their employ thousands of miserable creatures. In the cotton-spinning work, these creatures are kept, fourteen hours in each day, locked up, summer and winter, in a heat from eighty to eighty four degrees. The rules which they are subjected to are such as no negroes were ever subjected to'.

Conditions varied, of course, from factory to factory and other 'lords of the loom' were themselves prominent in attempts to secure legislation to improve factory conditions. Moreover, factory workers were not the only group of workers to be regarded as slaves during this period. William Varley of Higham wrote in January 1820 of his fellow handloom weavers whose 'haggard and meagre looks plainly indicate their hard usage, slavery which knows no bounds', and Feargus O'Connor told a Chartist gathering in 1838 his desire 'to try moral force as long as possible, even to the fullest extent, but he would always have them bear in mind, that it is better to die freemen than live slaves'.

The social movements which brought together the industrial communities of town and village across the South Pennines during the period 1780-1840 have more than a local significance. Chartism, for example, which derived much of its popular character from earlier Pennine protest movements, has been described by the historian J.T. Ward as 'the first great working-class political movement in the history of the world'. The ideas and arguments, beliefs and experiences of the people of the South Pennines, no less than their industry and inventiveness, were to have an impact far beyond the region itself.

1 Loyalists, Republicans & Reformers



Tom Paine after a portrait by Romney

The Declaration of American Independence of 1776 reawakened in Britain a movement for parliamentary reform which was sustained during the 1780s by Major John Cartwright's radical constitutional societies, the Rev. Christopher Wyvill's more moderately inclined Yorkshire Association

and dissenters in their unsuccessful campaigns for civil and religious liberties. The growing demand for reform was heightened by the celebration of the centenary of Britain's Glorious Revolution in 1788 and the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789. However, the increasingly violent course of events in France from the September Massacres in 1792 to the execution of the king and the declaration of war on Britain early in 1793 curbed much of the initial enthusiasm.

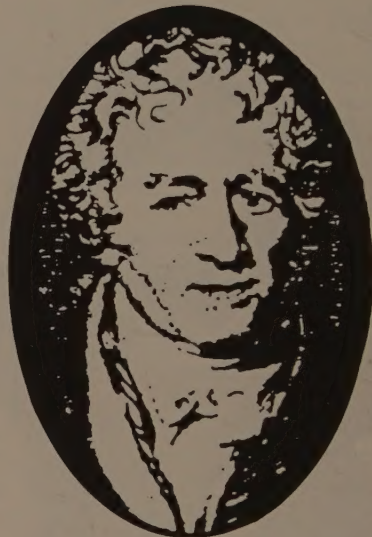
Nevertheless, encouraged by the publication of Tom Paine's avowedly republican *Rights of Man* and the foundation of the London Corresponding Society in 1791-92, many similar 'Jacobin' societies sprang up in the provinces, including societies at Royton, Rochdale, Halifax, Bradford, and Huddersfield. From Huddersfield in 1793 came the appeal to London: 'For God's sake, send us the word of enlightenment and philanthropy. Huddersfield abounds in true patriots, but we are beset by masses of ignorant aristocracy'.

Alongside this emerging popular radical movement was a no less vociferous loyalist movement. In 1789 the Pennine village of Delph was illuminated for an ox roasting to celebrate the apparent recovery of King George III from his first serious breakdown of health, and in 1790 the first 'Church and King' club in the country was founded in Manchester. From 1791-94 there was a spate of 'Church and King' riots, often encouraged by the magistrates, who turned a blind eye to the harassment of radicals by loyalist mobs. At Royton, a radical meeting was broken up and at Ripponden and around Heckmondwike,

effigies of Tom Paine abused. In November 1792, magistrates at Bingley obliged a Halifax bookseller, who had sold copies of a penny paper called *The French Constitution*, to acknowledge the error of his ways in a series of press announcements, whilst in Oldham, in December, publicans were required to sign a declaration of loyalty before their licences were renewed.

An upsurge of radical activity in 1794 and 1795 stirred the government into action, suspending habeas corpus and introducing new treason and sedition acts. In fact there were relatively few prosecutions under the Two Acts, whose effect was to drive the radical movement underground, so that further legislation was required in 1797 outlawing secret oaths and in 1798 banning secret societies like the United Englishmen. The government also made extensive use of spies, whose evidence has proved so problematical to historians trying to assess the nature and extent of the underground movement. Whether such a movement had a continuous existence in the South Pennines into the post-war period of distress and whether it had insurrectionary potential during the anxious years of the Despard conspiracy (1800-03), or Luddism (1812) or the March of the Blanketeers (1817) are still matters of contention amongst historians.

During the closing years of the Napoleonic Wars, Major Cartwright renewed his campaign for parliamentary reform. He arrived in Huddersfield in January 1813, a week after the Luddite executions in York, but in the charged atmosphere troops prevented him addressing a meeting. In 1816, the first provincial Hampden Club was founded at Royton, followed by a succession of similar clubs and political unions across the South Pennines at Oldham, Rochdale, Saddleworth and Huddersfield, interrupted only by renewed government repression



Robert Peel

in 1817. Samuel Bamford, the radical Middleton weaver, later attributed the harnessing of the social discontent of these post-war years to the influence of William Cobbett's *Weekly Political Register*, which first appeared in a cheap edition in 1816.

The post-war radical agitation reached its climax in the disastrous Peterloo meeting at Manchester in August 1819, which began orderly enough but ended in confusion and bloodshed with eleven dead and hundreds injured after first the yeomanry and then the hussars were ordered into the crowd to arrest Orator Hunt, who was to have addressed the meeting. As the large Pennine contingents from Oldham, Rochdale, Saddleworth, Lees, Mossley, and Halifax returned home with their sabre wounds and appalling news, a wave of anger swept across the Pennines.



Anne Lister

Anne Lister of Shibden Hall noted in her diary the presence 'of a great many peopletalking together in groups' on the streets of Halifax, and Benjamin Wilson later described in his autobiography how Skirecoat Green went into mourning. Throughout the autumn there were mass meetings in Halifax and Huddersfield and across the Pennines in Burnley, and by the end of the year the atmosphere was still tense. James Holroyd, a Wesleyan preacher in Haslingden, writing to Jabez Bunting just before Christmas 1819, described the personal harassment he had received as 'a marked kingsman' from the well-supported nightly radical parades in an area which had become a 'hotbed of radicalism'.

Magistrates responded with firm action under the Six Acts, which were rushed

through Parliament to deal with the situation, but after the abortive 'rising' at Grangemoor, near Huddersfield in April 1820, trade improved and the radical agitation subsided. When it revived at the end of the decade, as part of a nationwide movement for the reform of Parliament, this time it was to achieve a degree of success with the passing of the 1832 Reform Act. None of the townships in and around the South Pennines apart from Clitheroe, and Halifax briefly during the interregnum, had separate representation at Westminster before 1832. Henry Brougham, who was given a rapturous reception at Halifax Piece Hall during his campaign for election for one of the Yorkshire county seats in 1830 and who, as a member of the Whig cabinet which promoted the Reform Bill, played no small part in its ultimate success, recognised the need to extend representation to the Pennine industrial towns: 'We don't live now in the days of Barons, we live in the days of Leeds, of Bradford, of Halifax, of Huddersfield. We live in the days when men are industrious and desire to be free'.

As a result of the 1832 Act, Leeds, Bradford, Halifax and Oldham were to return two M.P.s to Parliament, and Huddersfield and Rochdale, one each. The electorate remained small, however, and included less than 2% of the population of Halifax in 1832. Influence could still be exerted. Anne Lister, a leading Halifax Tory, required all her tenants to vote as she directed and Huddersfield became virtually a pocket borough of the Ramsden family. In Oldham, however, where the working classes exerted considerable influence through excessive dealing, two leading Radicals, William Cobbett and John Fielden, were elected in 1832, and this pattern repeated, with one temporary setback in a by-election in 1835, up to 1847.

2 Bread Riots & Machine Breakers



Richard Arkwright—The Factory King

In 1783, bread riots, traditional forms of protest aimed at securing a fair distribution and pricing of food grains in times of dearth and soaring prices, erupted across the South Pennines at Rochdale, Halifax, Huddersfield and Bradford. The most serious, though in some respects the least typical, incident at Halifax resulted in the execution for robbery on Beacon Hill of two of the ringleaders, Mark Saltonstall and Thomas Spencer, brother-in-law and associate of the notorious Cragg Vale coiner, David Hartley, who had met a similar fate in 1770. In 1795, another year of acute food shortage, women at Delph, one of them brandishing a poker, raided an Oldham baker's van and, in a separate

incident, a mob from Saddleworth forced the Oldham shopkeepers to lower their meal and flour prices.

At Huddersfield in 1799, corn was seized at a warehouse and distributed at what was considered to be a fair price. Sporadic disturbances continued across the region into the 1840s, though by then they were giving way to other forms of protest concerned with defending living standards such as trade unionism, Chartism and the campaign for the repeal of the Corn Laws. Operative Anti-Corn Law League associations enjoyed an uneasy existence alongside Chartist groups in Huddersfield and Halifax, and Halifax provided the League with one of its first working class lecturers,



Luddites rebelling

Heyworth Hargreaves.

Another traditional form of early industrial protest, which involved three main groups of workers in the South Pennines, the Lancashire cotton spinners and handloom weavers and the Yorkshire croppers, was machine breaking. The early wave of machine breaking in which the Lancashire cotton spinners were involved was confined to the years 1779-80. The spinners, whose initial opposition to the spinning jenny had forced its inventor James Hargreaves to leave his native Stanhill, now recognised its value within the domestic system. In 1779, however, they turned their attention to those larger workshops and mills using the larger jennies and also the

carding and roving machines recently developed by Richard Arkwright. Over 100 machines were destroyed, and Arkwright's Birkacre mill near Chorley burned to the ground, prompting Arkwright and Robert Peel, who had also used the new machines in his mill at Altham, to follow Hargreaves into the Midlands. In 1780 the Lancashire cotton spinners petitioned Parliament expressing their disapproval of the growing use of machinery 'a domestic evil of very great magnitude', but as trade expanded after the American War the employment prospects for spinners improved and the attempts to check the introduction of machinery for spinning ceased.

The next major wave of disturbances erupted in 1812 on both sides of the Pennines when Luddism, a term whose origins in Midlands folklore is rather obscure, was first applied to machine breaking when threats began to be made under the pseudonym of Ned Ludd, King Ludd or General Ludd. In Lancashire, it was the turn of the handloom weavers, who had already attacked a Manchester factory using an early power loom in 1792, and in Yorkshire, the croppers, who controlled the highly skilled finishing end of the woollen industry and who had also attacked gig mills in 1802, as well as petitioning Parliament to enforce ancient Tudor legislation which, they argued, unequivocally banned such machinery.

Following an unsympathetic parliamentary enquiry in 1806, the ancient statutes were repealed in 1809, clearing the way for the wider adoption of the gig mills and also the shearing frames, designed by Harmer of Sheffield and first patented in 1787. The situation became particularly acute during the difficult war years when trade was disrupted by Napoleon's Continental System and Britain's retaliatory Orders in Council which brought her into conflict with

the U.S.A., a major importer of woollen cloth. Added to this, a succession of bad harvests had sent food prices spiralling.

Yorkshire Luddism became more organised and ambitious as it developed. Following an initial incident in Leeds in January 1812, there was a spate of attacks from late February to early April on small isolated workshops in the Huddersfield area at Marsh, Leymoor, Crosland Moor, Taylor Hill, Slaithwaite, Dungeon Wood, Honley and Holmfirth. With the success of these raids behind them, the Luddites launched two attacks within two days early in April on larger mills using the hated machinery, the first on John Foster's mill at Horbury, where Foster's three sons, unceremoniously bundled out of the house at gunpoint in their nightshirts, were forced to witness the destruction of expensive machinery and cloth; the second on William Cartwright's well-defended mill at Rawfolds, which proved a more formidable target and cost two of the attackers their lives.

With the failure of the Rawfolds attack, machine breaking in Yorkshire virtually came to an end and Luddism entered a violent phase, culminating in the assassination of William Horsfall of Ottiwells Mill, Marsden, the other prominent local mill-owner who had espoused the hated machinery at the end of the month. Seventeen men were hanged at York in January 1813 for their part in the disturbances, after Joseph Radcliffe, the local magistrate most active in tracking down the convicted men, had had his request for exemplary executions in the Colne Valley turned down.

The Lancashire disturbances of 1812 were a mixture of machine breaking, food rioting and attempts to put pressure on employers for better wages and the government for the regulation of trade. Early incidents occurred at Stockport, Bolton, Manchester and Macclesfield, outside the South Pen-

nine region, but the most serious disturbances, the successive attacks on Burton's power loom factory at Middleton in April, in which there were almost as many fatalities and casualties as at Peterloo, began in part as a food riot in Oldham and drew some support from the Saddleworth area.

The most extensive attacks on power looms in and around the South Pennines came in the 1820s, especially during the slumps of 1826 and 1829, when modifications to Edmund Cartwright's power loom enabled it to be used more widely. From April 1826, twenty one mills were attacked and more than 1,000 power looms destroyed in disturbances which began in Accrington and quickly spread across East Lancashire and later across the Pennines to Skipton and Bradford. At Chadderton, the troops killed seven rioters and wounded others. Thomas Duckworth, a sixteen year old Haslingden weaver, recalled in later life how starvation had driven the weavers to smash the power looms at all costs, despite the warnings of the soldiers. Eventually sixty-six rioters were tried at Lancaster and ten sentenced to death, though these sentences were later commuted to transportation. There were further disturbances in 1829 with renewed trade depression, but once the power loom had become economically viable machine breaking was no deterrent to the manufacturers and the handloom weavers, like the croppers before them, had to accept that they were fighting a losing battle against the process of industrialisation.

3 Factory Reforms



Richard Oastler

Although the power loom was only successfully introduced on a large scale in cotton in the 1820s, worsteds in the 1830s and woollens in the 1840s, technological breakthroughs before 1780 in carding and spinning stimulated the move towards factory production of yarn in the cotton

industry during the last two decades of the eighteenth century, when cotton mills sprang up not only in Lancashire, but across the Pennines around Skipton, Keighley, Halifax, Huddersfield and Bradford. For a variety of reasons, mechanisation of the woollen and worsted industries was more gradual. Woollen scribbling and worsted spinning had been mechanised by 1800, but woollen spinning and worsted combing, like woollen and worsted weaving, remained cottage industries for most of the period before 1840.

The emergence of these new units of production quickly aroused controversy. Witness after witness testified to the 1806 parliamentary enquiry into the woollen trade to the harshness of factory discipline, the insecurity of factory employment and the adverse effects the factories had on health and morals. George Walker, the Leeds artist, also commented on this latter problem in his portrayal of Yorkshire factory children in 1814, though he acknowledged that some mill owners had shown greater responsibility to their workers than others. William Cooke Taylor, by contrast, on his tour of the Lancashire manufacturing districts in 1842, insisted that child labour in Lancashire 'was at its worst and greatest height before anybody thought of a factory' and that under the domestic system where children were put to work 'as soon as they could crawl, parents were the hardest of taskmasters'.

Initially, public concern focussed on the abuse of pauper children imported into the remote, thinly populated factory areas from overcrowded workhouses to serve under a sham apprenticeship system. In 1802, Sir Robert Peel, himself a factory owner, secured the passing of the first factory act to deal with this particular problem. It failed, partly because it was not properly enforced by magistrates, and

partly because other children were now substituted for the pauper children banned from night working under the act.

In 1818, a Huddersfield tragedy reawakened public concern over factory children. Early one February morning, a fire which started on the ground floor of Thomas Atkinson's cotton mill at Colnebridge destroyed the factory within half an hour and, in the holocaust, seventeen young girls perished. Peel, who had been studying the problem of child labour since 1816, moving the second reading of a new bill to control employment of children in cotton factories declared his intention of preventing the recurrence of such a tragedy, but the resultant Factory Act of 1819 was no more successful in its application than that of 1802.

The campaign to provide more effective legislation on factory conditions continued through the 1820s, when the ideas of Robert Owen and the practical experiments he had conducted at New Lanark also gained wide currency. In Lancashire, John Doherty included the demand for a ten hour day in his developing trade union organisation and tried to prosecute individual mill owners for their infringement of the early factory acts.

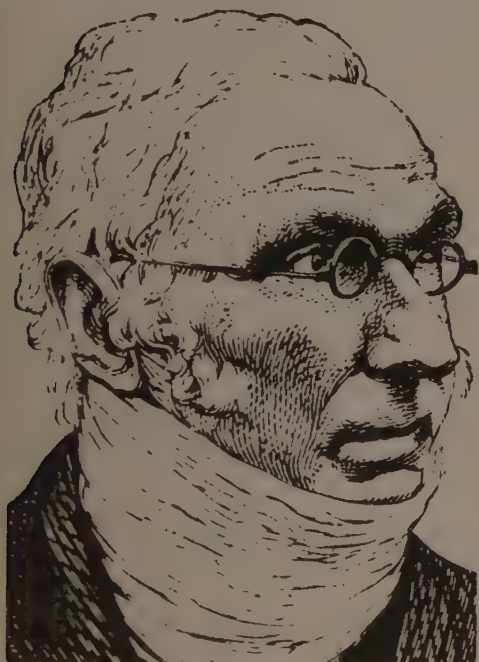
The movement intensified in the 1830s and developed a new base in the West Riding and a new leadership. Already in Bradford a number of manufacturers had begun to press for a ten hour day. One of them, John Wood, a Tory evangelical worsted manufacturer of Horton Hall, met Richard Oastler, an agent on the estate of Thomas Thornhill of Fixby, in September 1830 and challenged him to take up the cause of the factory children. In a famous letter to the *Leeds Mercury*, published in October, on the subject of 'Slavery in Yorkshire', he exposed the plight of thousands of children who worked a thirteen



Parson Bull of Bierley

hour day 'in those magazines of infantile slavery — the worsted mills in the town and neighbourhood of Bradford'. Another correspondent, Richard Webster, wrote to confirm that conditions were no better in Halifax and the movement was born.

Although the campaign had begun in the columns of the *Leeds mercury*, its editor, Edward Baines, eventually came out against the movement. Instead, the movement received the support of the Tory *Leeds Intelligencer* and in Lancashire, Doherty's *Poor Man's Advocate* published weekly condemnations of individual cotton firms. Oastler's campaign also received the backing of medical opinion such as Dr. J.K.



The Rev. Patrick Bronte

Walker of Huddersfield; Anglican clergymen like Parson Bull of Bierley, the Rev. Patrick Bronte of Haworth, the Vicar of Huddersfield and the Rector of Keighley; literary figures like Southey, Coleridge and Wordsworth; M.P.s like Michael Saddler, John Fielden and Lord Ashley, later Earl of Shaftesbury; and large numbers of working men, representing both the older declining crafts and the new factory workers. On a Sunday morning in June 1831, representatives of the Short Time Committees in Huddersfield, led by Lawrence Pitkeighley, visited Oastler and agreed to work with him in the famous 'Fixby Compact'. The popular support commanded by this extraordinary Tory-Radical alliance was shortly to be demonstrated by the celebrated march to York later in 1831 and the

mammoth Wibsey Moor rally at Bradford in July 1833.

Oastler, dubbed the 'Factory King' became the pivot of the movement; the Short Time Committees its organisational strength; much of its moral fervour as a crusade of 'souls v. pounds, shillings and pence' was supplied by evangelicals, and many of its meetings took place in Anglican schools or Primitive Methodist chapels; and much of the movement's finance was supplied by sympathetic manufacturers, who supported the campaign from a mixture of humanitarianism and economic self-interest, including Tory Anglicans like Wood, Rand and Thompson and a few Dissenters like the young Titus Salt and John Fielden. They were opposed from the outset by other manufacturers, particularly the master spinners of Halifax, who met at the Old Cock Inn in March 1831 under the chairmanship of James Akroyd and formulated the 'fourteen points' which were to become the basis of the counter-campaign. They were supported by the Vicar of Halifax and his colleagues, who had bitter memories of Oastler's campaign of 1827 against the reimposition of tithes in the parish of Halifax.

Three successive factory bills were debated during the period 1831-33. The bill which finally reached the statute book, Althorp's Act of 1833, although not the bill the movement had wanted, did go further than any of its predecessors in limiting the hours of work of children and young people and in its provision for education and inspection, though there were still evasions as a Select Committee in 1840 revealed. Further legislation was introduced in 1844 and 1847, when John Fielden introduced the bill which was to give women and young people a ten hour day. By 1841, power loom weavers at his factory in Todmorden, the largest factory in the South Pennines, were working only eight hours a day.

4 Anti-Poor Law Agitators

THE NEW POOR LAW BILL IN FORCE.

All round the country there is a pretty picce of work
All round the country against poor people's will,
Feeble, and borne down with grief,
They ask the Pari-h for relief, (Law Bill.
They tell you to go home and try to learn the Poor

An expanding population, soaring poor rates since the 1790s, the arguments of political economists against a system of poor relief which, in many places, involved the supplementing of wages from the poor rates, and widespread rural unrest in the south in 1830 prompted the Whig government to set up a Royal Commission in 1832 to find some solution to the growing problem of poverty. Its recommendations formed the basis of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834. Parishes were to be grouped together in unions, each of which was to maintain a workhouse, managed locally by elected boards of guardians. Outdoor relief to the able-bodied was to be gradually withdrawn and a spartan workhouse life provided so as to ensure that it was more miserable than that of the lowest paid worker outside, thereby discouraging resort to the workhouse, except in dire necessity. A central body of three commissioners based in London,

with salaried assistants and a secretary was appointed by the government to implement the new act.

Although the implementation of the act in the south had met with sporadic resistance, this was mild in comparison with the highly organised, often protracted and sometimes violent opposition which the assistant commissioners encountered when they turned their attention to the north in January 1837, during a period of bad harvests and severe trade depression which forced many unemployed and underemployed factory and handicraft workers to seek poor relief.

Nowhere was the opposition to the act more pronounced than in the industrial towns and villages of the South Pennines. The new poor law had been designed for the agricultural south and was entirely inappropriate to a northern industrial setting. No workhouse could suddenly accommodate all the workers suddenly and often

MARKET DAYS AND EARLY CLOSING

Town	Early Closing	Market Day
Accrington	Wed	Tue, Fri, Sat
Barrowford	Tue	
Bingley	Tue	Wed, Fri
Bradford	Wed	Fri, Sat
Burnley	Tue	Mon, Thurs, Sat
Bury	Tue	Wed, Fri, Sat
Colne	Tue	Wed, Sat
Cowling	Tue	
Denholme	Tue	
Elland	Tue	Fri
Gargrave	Tue	
Halifax	Thur	
Haworth	Tue	
Hebden Bridge	Tue	Thurs
Holmfirth	Tue	Thurs
Huddersfield	Wed	Mon
Keighley	Tue	Wed, Fri, Sat
Littleborough	Tue	
Milnrow	Tue	
Mytholmroyd	Tue	
Nelson	Tue	Wed, Fri, Sat
Oldham	Tue	Mon, Fri, Sat
Ramsbottom	Wed	
Rawtenstall	Tue	Thurs, Sat
Rochdale	Tue	Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri, Sat
Shipley	Wed	Fri, Sat
Skipton	Tue	Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat
Sowerby Bridge	Wed	Tue, Fri
Todmorden	Tue	Wed, Fri, Sat

Follow the Country Code

Enjoy the countryside and respect its life and work
 Guard against all risks of fire
 Fasten all gates
 Keep your dogs under control
 Keep to public paths across farmland
 Use gates and stiles to cross fences, hedges and walls
 Leave livestock, crops and machinery alone
 Take your litter home
 Help to keep all water clean
 Protect wild life, plants and trees
 Take special care on country roads
 Make no unnecessary noise

WHERE TO STAY, WHERE TO EAT

Accommodation lists are available from local Tourist Information Centre. 'Where to Stay' guides are available nationally. Restaurant lists are also available from local Tourist Information Centres.





SELECTED SITES

- 1 Follow the Luddite Trail and discover what lay behind the violent, destructive reaction against mechanisation in the textile industry. (Trail by Lesley Kipling and Nick Hall available from Pennine Heritage, price £2).
- 2 Take a look at the Colne Valley by walking the circular route which begins and ends at the Colne Valley Museum housed in hand-loom weavers' Cottages dating from the 1840s (Colne Valley Circular Walk, £1 from Tourist Information Centres).
- 3 Gawthorpe Hall (Padiham). The home of James Kay-Shuttleworth, the factory owner and reformer, is well worth a day out to learn more about how people lived. Dating from the seventeenth century, the house is now run by the National Trust. There is a collection of costume from 1800 and changing exhibitions.
- 4 Picnic on Pendle and visit the Lancashire villages of Sabden and Newchurch, an area which bubbled with religious and later Chartist unrest. Sabden is connected with Richard Cobden the radical manufacturer. Wesley preached on Pendle and found opponents as well as converts.
- 5 Cragg Vale in the Calder Valley was known as the "wild country west of Halifax" in the eighteenth century. It was the home of the infamous coin clippers and counterfeiters. The Dusty Miller Inn in Mytholmroyd is a good starting place but alas the secret tunnel to Elphaborough Hall is not open!
- 6 Between Mytholmroyd and Halifax lies Luddenden (portrayed in song by Bob Pegg) where there is a village school built in 1825, there the curious will find twin lockups—one for Midgley and one for Warley township.
- 7 For those convicted in Halifax there was the Gibbet Law—a reconstruction reminds visitors that Halifax was to be feared as greatly as Hell (and Hull!) Explore also the Piece Hall once busy with clothiers and drop in at the Old Cock Inn, the conspirators' den.
- 8 The Skelmanthorpe Flag is on view at the Tolson Memorial Museum at Huddersfield (open all year) and provides a rare chance to see one of the banners raised in the cause of freedom and universal suffrage. Since it was made in 1819 it has had an interesting history including being raised at the Chartist Rally at Peep Green and being buried for protection.
- 9 Higher Hill Museum at Helmshore (telephone Rossendale 226459) is based in a water powered fulling mill built in 1789 although other textile machinery of the period can be seen giving some idea of the nature of factory work which many people thought made workers into slaves.
- 10 Factory Kings lived in nineteenth century palaces such as Cliffe Castle the home of the Butterfields at Keighley. Now a museum, the other side of life can be imagined by viewing the reconstructed craftsmen's workshops, among them one of a clog-maker.



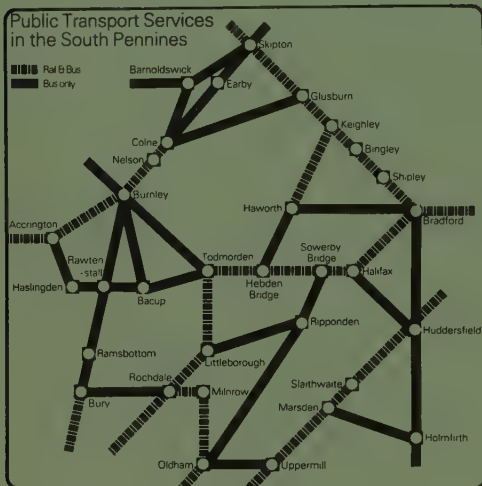


Don't forget, every monument tells a story: Atkinson Fire Memorial, Kirkheaton Parish Church; Joshua Hobson Memorial, Huddersfield Cemetery; John Fielden Statue, Centre Vale Park, Todmorden; Richard Oastler Statue Bradford, are starting points.



Ten bus operators provide links into the South Pennines from the surrounding towns and cities. Timetable enquiries should be made to the appropriate enquiry office or to the nearest Tourist Information Centre.

Public Transport in the South Pennines



Railway Services

Four British Rail lines serve the area. Telephone enquiries to: Blackburn 662537; Bradford 33994; Huddersfield 31226; Leeds 448133; Manchester 061-832 8353.

The privately-operated Keighley and Worth Valley Railway provides services between Keighley, Haworth and Oxenhope. Timetable enquiries to: Haworth 45214.

Bus Operators:

Blackburn Borough Transport, 15/17 Railway Road, Blackburn BB1 5AZ (Blackburn 51112)

Burnley & Pendle Joint Transport Committee, Queensgate, Colne Road, Burnley BB10 1HH (Burnley 25244)

Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive, County Hall, Manchester M60 1HX (061-273 3322)

Hyndburn Borough Transport, 142 Blackburn Road, Accrington BB5 1RD (Accrington 33657/8/9)

Pennine Motor Services, Grouse Garage, Gargrave, Skipton, North Yorkshire (Gargrave 215)

Ribble Motor Services Limited, Frenchwood Avenue, Preston, Lancashire PR1 4LV (Preston 54754; Burnley 23125)

Rossendale Transport, 8 Bacup Road, Rawten-stall, Rossendale BB4 7ND (Rossendale 217777/213677)

West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive, Metro House, West Parade, Wakefield WF1 1NS (Wakefield 378234)

(Bradford District — Bradford 20505; Calderdale District — Halifax 65985; Kirklees District — Huddersfield 26313)

West Yorkshire Road Car Company Limited, PO Box 24, East Parade, Harrogate HG1 5LS (Harrogate 66061)

Yorkshire Traction Company Limited, Upper Sheffield Road, Barnsley, S70 4PP (Huddersfield 23389)

National Express Coach Information:

061-228 3881; Leeds 460011

INFORMATION CENTRES

Bradford: Central Library, Princes Way, Bradford (Bradford 33081)

Halifax: Piece Hall, Halifax, West Yorkshire (Halifax 68725)

Haworth: 2-4 West Lane, Haworth, West Yorkshire (Haworth 42329)

Hebden Bridge: 1 Bridge Gate, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire (Hebden Bridge 843831)

Hollingsworth Lake: Rakewood Road, Littleborough, Lancashire (Littleborough 73421)

Holmfirth: Huddersfield Road, Holmfirth, Huddersfield (Holmfirth 4992)

Huddersfield: Albion Street, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire (Huddersfield 22133)

Nelson: 19-23 Leeds Road, Nelson, Lancashire (Nelson 692890)

Oldham: Greaves Street, Oldham, Greater Manchester (061-620 8930)

Skipton: High Street Car Park, Skipton, North Yorkshire (Skipton 2809)

temporarily laid off when trade was bad, and if taken into a workhouse, they lost their homes, tools and other possessions, making it difficult for them to find employment when the economic situation improved. Moreover, many northern townships had successfully adapted the old poor law to meet these fluctuating economic conditions, particularly since the establishment of select vestries in 1819.

In Burnley, for example, a small committee of leading inhabitants, augmented by master cotton spinners during the slump of 1826, ensured that five of their number were in attendance at the workhouse, which the select vestry had rebuilt in 1819, each Friday afternoon to consider applications for assistance and issue doles, shuttles, looms, clogs, clothing, blankets, or, if necessary, recommend a spell in the workhouse, which provided accommodation, washhouses, a weaving shed, piggery and gardens.

The improved administration enabled a stricter control to be maintained over expenditure, so that poor rates in the West Riding, for instance, were on average a third of those levied in some southern counties. Ratepayers and local poor law administrators in the north, including many J.P.s, such as William Busfield Ferrand of Bingley, John Fielden of Todmorden, Matthew Thompson and J.G. Paley of Bradford, were therefore particularly infuriated by the threat of interference in their affairs by the assistant commissioners from London, one of whom, Alfred Power, reported that opposition to the new poor law in the north came from 'a considerable number of respectable and influential persons'. In 1838, the ratepayers of Kirkheaton resolved unanimously 'that we will keep our own poor as we have a good poor house and everything in good order

and as we do not understand the new poor law we are determined to go on in the old way'.

This opposition from magistrates and ratepayers, which cut across political divisions, when combined with a widespread popular agitation presented a formidable challenge to the London officials. In the West Riding, where the popular movement inherited the organisation of the Short Time Committees, a co-ordinating committee was set up early in 1837. One of its first moves was to organise a massive rally against the new poor law at Peep Green, now Hartshead Moor, in May. By November, a similar organisation had been set up in South Lancashire, and in several places, including Elland, separate female Anti-Poor Law associations established. The popular movement was sustained by the oratory of Parson Bull of Bierley, who crossed the Pennines in March 1837 to lead the chronically depressed handloom weavers of Colne in their resistance to the act; Richard Oastler, whose condemnation of the 'three stinking commissioned funguses' and the 'Act of Treason against the Constitution, Christianity, the State and the King, as well as against the Poor' added to the intensity of the movement in Huddersfield; the Rev. J.R. Stephens, a fierce Tory dissentient Wesleyan minister from Ashton-under-Lyne and Feargus O'Connor, a former Irish M.P., who was eventually to dominate the movement. A fierce propaganda war was also launched in the *Northern Star*, founded in 1837 and by pamphleteers such as Samuel Roberts and Christopher Tinker, whose main targets were the 'Bastilles' which broke up families and treated their inmates as prisoners.

The new poor law encountered varying degrees of opposition within the region and even within particular unions. Fielden's influence, strong in the Todmorden and

Langfield townships of the Todmorden Union was less apparent nearer to Halifax, where the board of guardian elections in 1837 produced a sweeping majority in favour of the new poor law and where the first new workhouse under the act in the South Pennines was built in 1839. In the new Burnley Union, the fervent resistance encountered at Colne became more muted nearer to Burnley itself, where the existing workhouse continued in use until 1876. In the neighbouring Haslingden and Keighley Unions, and at Bury, Bradford and Dewsbury, the commissioners eventually met with success, after strong resistance, but Rochdale remained intransigent until 1845 and Oldham until 1847, whilst some of the fiercest opposition to the new poor law came from Oastler's Huddersfield and Fielden's Todmorden.

In Huddersfield, the initial meeting between assistant commissioner Alfred Power and local officials in January 1837 was stormed by an angry crowd, urged by Christopher Tinker to 'mark their names on a bit of lead, put it into a rifle and sent it through the first man that attempted to put the law into force'; in June, the old workhouse was sacked and effigies of the act's supporters burned; later in the summer, after a riotous election campaign, Oastler came within an ace of winning the Huddersfield seat and for the next eighteen months persistent obstruction prevented the board of guardians from implementing the system.

In Todmorden, Fielden first organised a boycott of the elections in the townships where he had most influence, then threatened to close his mills simultaneously, throwing all his workers on to the poor rates, and finally urged a boycott of the rates. When attempts were made to seize the property of the defaulting overseers a constable was stripped naked and beaten

West Riding MEETING.

FRIENDS OF HUMANITY, BE AT
YOUR POST!

TO BE HELD AT THE WILKES & CO. HALL, Monday, Morning next
at 10 o'clock, to be followed by a

'FACTORY KING'

FRIENDS are invited to Wilkes & Co. Hall,
Grand Central Hall, to see a Factory Tyrant and

TEN HOUR BILL.

A number of friends are expected to be present at the meeting, and division of labour will be made under Flags and Banners, with suitable addresses, and accompanied with Music.
Banners have been made from all the Towns of the WEST-RIDING, & many Lodges & Unions, determining to attend

TO BE HELD AT THE WILKES & CO. HALL,
Grand Central Hall, to see a Factory Tyrant and

One of the posters calling
for the Great Wilsley Low Moor
demonstration on behalf of
the 10 hour Bill, 11 July 1833

up. Crowds later rampaged up and down the Calder Valley sacking the houses of local poor law officials and peace was restored only after the union had been placed under what amounted to military occupation.

Despite numerous petitions forwarded to Westminster Fielden's motion for repeal of the new poor law was easily defeated in February 1838, though a significant victory was won in the decision to allow outdoor relief to the able-bodied to continue in Lancashire and Yorkshire. Determined opponents of the new poor law, convinced that it would not be repealed until Parliament was radically reformed, now turned to Chartism.

5 The Early Chartists

A Chartist Hymn

God of the Poor! shall labour eat?
Or drones alone find labour sweet?
Lo, they who call the earth their own,
Take all we have,—and give a stone!

Yet bring not thou on them the doom
That scourged the proud of wretched Rome,
Who stole, for few, the lands of all,
To make all life a funeral.

Lord! not for vengeance rave the wrong'd,
The hopes deferred, the woes prolonged;
Our cause is just, our Judge divine;
But judgement, God of all, is thine!

from *Corn Law Rhymes*, c. 1830, by Ebenezer Elliot

Chartism sprang partly from the combined effects of a downward turn in the trade cycle in 1837 and a run of bad harvests, set against a background of continuing industrial change, and partly from the growing sense of alienation of the working classes from a Whig government which had denied them the vote in 1832 and the ten hour working day in 1833, prosecuted the trade unionists of Tolpuddle and Glasgow and attempted to inflict upon them a rigorous new system of poor relief based on the workhouse. It derived its political

programme, none of which was particularly new, from William Lovett's London artisans who, with the help and encouragement of other metropolitan Radicals, published the People's Charter in the late spring of 1838 with its famous six points: the vote for all men, annual parliaments, the ballot, payment of M.P.s, equal electoral districts and the abolition of property qualifications for election to Parliament.

Its initial strategy of a national petition backed by a national convention and financed by a national rent was derived from

Thomas Attwood's revived Birmingham Political Union and much of its popular character and organisational strength from the South Pennine textile districts, where the factory and Anti-Poor Law movements coalesced during 1838 in their support for the Charter. John Fielden, Richard Oastler and the Rev. J.R. Stephens all appeared on Chartist platforms during this initial phase of the movement and Fielden, with Attwood, presented the first national petition to Parliament in 1839. Moreover, all the northern delegates to the national convention of 1839, including Oastler's right hand man in Huddersfield, Lawrence Pitkeighley, had been trained in the factory and Anti-Poor Law movements, together with such local stalwarts of Chartism in the South Pennines as William Thornton and Benjamin Rushton of Halifax, David Weatherhead of Keighley and Richard Pilling of Ashton-under-Lyne.

The key figure, however, in the emergence of Chartism in the north was the Irishman Feargus O'Connor, who had first toured the north in 1835, and later espoused the agitation against the new poor law. With the technical assistance of Joshua Hobson, an experienced radical printer and factory reformer from Huddersfield, he founded the *Northern Star* in Leeds in November 1837 and in June 1838 launched the Great Northern Union at a meeting on Hunslet Moor, with the aim of uniting all the reforming associations of the area. Under its auspices, a series of meetings was organised throughout the West Riding to promote the Charter and elect delegates to the National Convention to be held in London the following February.

The largest of these meetings was held on Hartshead Moor in October where a crowd perhaps as large as might be expected at a modern First Division football

match assembled from all parts of the West Riding. There was a convivial atmosphere, with bands playing, banners waving and food and drinks on sale. But the inflammatory tone of the speeches at this meeting and at the many torchlight meetings held throughout the winter on the lonely Pennine moors strengthened the growing conviction that the Charter must be achieved forcibly, if it could not be achieved peaceably. Nevertheless, the West Riding Chartists still conveyed an impression of orderliness when they met a second time at Hartshead Moor the following May. William Thornton, a Methodist lay preacher from Halifax opened the proceedings in prayer, prompting O'Connor, tongue in cheek, to remark that when the Charter was granted he would see that he was made Archbishop of York.

Although O'Connor had launched his campaign from Leeds, Chartism had quickly taken a deeper hold in other parts of the West Riding, particularly where there were large numbers of depressed handworkers. Across the Pennines, like earlier radical movements, Chartism grew up in the orbit of Manchester, under the influence of the Manchester Political Union and the Manchester Universal Suffrage Association. A series of meetings was held in the summer of 1838 culminating in a large scale demonstration at Kersal Moor in September, which attracted some 50,000 people, including representatives of many craft unions and political unions from such radical strongholds as Royton, Ashton, Rochdale, Middleton and Bury. As in the West Riding torchlight meetings continued throughout the winter and there was much talk of violence, prompting the editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, who had not been unduly perturbed by the Kersal Moor meeting to write in December that there was a danger of 'incalculable mischief in the manufacturing districts'.



A cartoon from Punch showing John Russell who introduced the first reform act

Responding to a flood of alarming reports from magistrates in these districts of arming, drilling, arson and conspiracy, the government banned torchlight rallies in December, and by the end of the month the most violent Chartist orator, J.R. Stephens had been arrested. He had alarmed the Chartist moderate John Collins when he had told a Saddleworth meeting earlier in the year that the only question was 'when should they commence burning and destroying the mills and other property'. In the spring, drilling was banned and Major General Sir Charles Napier appointed commander of the troops in the northern district. He soon received reports that 'a gallery had been run out from a coal-pit' at the Burnley barracks and that it was intended to blow them up, but further evidence and his own observation of the May 1839 meeting at Kersal Moor led him to conclude that 'the people are tired of the physical force party'.

The rejection of the first national petition by Parliament in July led to disagreement in the convention about future Chartist

objectives. A decision to call for a general strike was later reversed, though there were attempts in Lancashire and parts of Yorkshire, especially Bradford, Halifax, Dewsbury and Sheffield, there appear to have been plans for a rising linked with the ill-fated attack on Newport in November. In January 1840, 100 armed men marched through Dewsbury, fired a few shots in the market place and then dispersed and later that month, Robert Peddie, a Scot, led an abortive attempt to take Bradford.

Following these failures and a spate of Chartist arrests, Chartism was in retreat by the spring of 1840. It was not yet defeated, however, and indeed continued to exist in a variety of forms for at least another decade, sustained, in no small measure, by the efforts of Chartists in the South Pennines. The National Charter Association, founded in Manchester in July 1840, attracted strong and enduring support from the textile towns of the South Pennines. Chartists in Oldham, Rochdale, Hebden Bridge, Bacup and Bradford responded readily to O'Connor's Land Plan, whilst in Leeds and Halifax, Chartists like Joshua Hobson and Benjamin Wilson became active in local government, or, like Ernest Jones, contested parliamentary elections. The South Pennines also retained its militancy. When the plug rioters swept over the Pennines in 1842 following the rejection of the second national petition there were serious clashes with troops at Salterhebble and in Bradford, after the rejection of the third national petition in 1848.

Although the Chartist petitions were all rejected and none of the six points realised before 1858, Chartism made a significant contribution to the political education of a generation of working men and helped shape both mid-Victorian liberalism as well as later nineteenth century socialism.

6 Early Trade Unionists

The terms trade union and strike were coined in the early nineteenth century to describe activities which, though not in themselves new, had begun to assume greater significance with growing industrialisation. Local journeyman trade clubs and friendly societies, providing mutual insurance against sickness, unemployment and death, had existed from the later seventeenth century, but had proved difficult to organise in the cottage based textile industries of spinning and weaving and, in many cases, were treated as illegal under both common and statute law, even before the Combination Acts of 1799-1800. The law does not seem to have prevented the development of combinations, however, some of which operated under the guise of registered friendly societies, which were given legal status and protection for their funds under an act of 1793.

Before mechanisation, woolcombers and croppers were the most easily organised and consequently the best paid textile workers. A woolcombers' union, which evidently began as a friendly society, was able, by the late eighteenth century, to maintain minimum piece rates, effectively operate a closed shop, organise the petitioning of Parliament and the promotion of an unsuccessful parliamentary bill against Cartwright's woolcombing machinery and hold a national conference at Coventry in 1812. Whilst combers were sometimes prosecuted for their involvement in illegal combinations, as at Halifax in 1791, they seem to have encountered the strongest opposition from their employers.

Following the national conference in 1812, employers at Keighley resolved 'not to employ any workman connected with the society of woolcombers calling themselves 'the United Societies of Great Britain or any similar society'. Nevertheless by 1825,

Keighley had three combers' clubs meeting at the Fleece, the Lord Rodney, and the Black Bull, Damside, where hospitality could easily be provided for combers 'tramping' for work, which evidently supported John Tester's Union Association of Woolcombers and Stuff Weavers in its struggle for union recognition in neighbouring Bradford, following the repeal of the Combination Acts. Once again, however, the Keighley employers resolved 'to turn all off who can be ascertained to support the Combers and Weavers Union in any manner either direct or indirect'. Despite Tester's able leadership and the massive financial support which poured into Bradford from other parts of the country, the six months strike was defeated and by 1832 the woolcombers' position in Bradford had deteriorated to such an extent that it was decided to discontinue the colourful septennial festival in honour of the woolcombers' patron saint, Bishop Blaize. The combers suffered a final blow late in the next decade with the extensive introduction of combing machinery.

Drawings from *A Socialist Parable*
Free competition showing the
struggle for survival



The notorious Yorkshire croppers' Institution developed from a sickness benefit club in the 1790s and by the turn of the century was organising, in conjunction with the shearmen of the West country, a petitioning movement to maintain ancient legislation against the gig mills. In Yorkshire, a well-structured organisation based at Birstall raised vast sums to present the croppers' case to the ensuing parliamentary enquiry of 1806. Despite their efforts, however, in 1809 the old prohibitions on shearing machinery were lifted and the croppers turned to Luddism and when this failed the men whom Earl Fitzwilliam had once described as 'the tyrants of the country' disappeared from history.

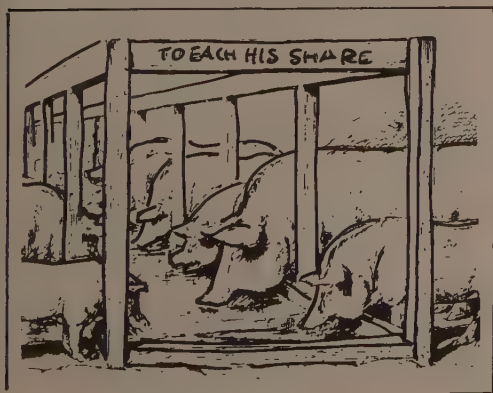
Across the Pennines, the cotton spinners formed themselves into unions as soon as spinning became a separate industry for men. In 1810 there was an attempt at amalgamation, extended in 1818 to other trades, with the formation of the 'Philanthropic Society'. In both years, the spinners struck for higher wages and in 1818 the

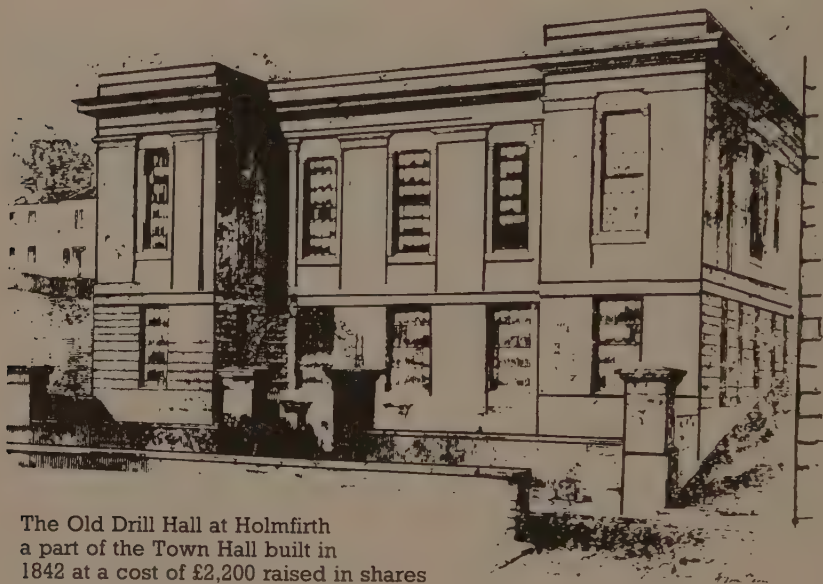
Lancashire weavers followed their example. The attempt to form a federation of weavers' unions in 1799 had been one of the reasons for the introduction of the Combination Acts. In 1808-09, the weavers accordingly turned to petitioning to secure statutory minimum wages and when this failed, impounded shuttles to bring work to a halt. They suffered a further blow with the repeal of Elizabethan wage-fixing statutes in 1813 and in the post-war period many like Samuel Bamford of Middleton turned to political action.

In 1818 there were particularly serious disturbances in Burnley, which led to the building of a new gaol and barracks, prompting William Varley, a handloom weaver of Higham, to write in his diary in 1820: 'They have about 200 soldiers at their grand and populous but infamous town of Burnley. These soldiers must be maintained even if the poor weaver die at the looms'. By the end of the decade, a typical weaver earned one eighth of what his counterpart had earned in 1795.

Following the repeal of the Combination Acts in 1824, Lancashire took the lead in union development. In 1829, John Doherty, a young Irishman and former spinner, launched a 'Grand General Union of Operative Spinners' after an unsuccessful wave of strikes. In 1830 he appealed to other trades for support and established the National Association for the Protection of Labour, which gained support on both sides of the Pennines, but declined rapidly in 1831 when its secretary absconded with the funds after the collapse of the Lancashire spinners' strike. Doherty's ambitious scheme foreshadowed further Owenite attempts to form a general union in the 1830s culminating in the short lived Grand National Consolidated Trades Union of 1834 with its lodges, secret ritual and regalia.

The Democratic Society. One of the aims of the Trade Union movement was to ensure that working people received a fairer share





The Old Drill Hall at Holmfirth
a part of the Town Hall built in
1842 at a cost of £2,200 raised in shares

Meanwhile in Yorkshire, union development continued to experience intense opposition from employers. The Saddleworth Weavers and Spinners Union had to be disbanded in 1830 after a three year existence during which the employers had tried to prosecute union secretary George Rhodes on a charge of conspiracy and employers retaliated with the formation of a secret Clothiers' Union based on Leeds with the 'Bond', whereby each pledged himself not to employ any member of a union and the Yorkshire Trades Union was broken by 1835, when many unionists in the aftermath of Tolpuddle turned to Chartism.

However, the friendly societies, which did so much to foster working class community spirit with their regular convivial gatherings, continued to grow, especially with the

development of affiliated orders of Odd-fellows, Foresters, Shepherds and Druids after 1810. In Holmfirth, the Order of Druids was able to build the imposing Druids' Hall at a cost of £1,800 and local friendly societies were the largest investors in the savings bank established at Keighley in 1819. Other investors included the building clubs, which offered planned saving for house purchase to those who could afford. The King Street Club Houses at Keighley, in existence by the end of the Napoleonic Wars, were built sixty-six to the acre, many of them back-to-back. Members balloted for the houses as they became available and when all members had been provided for the clubs wound up. These terminating building clubs were the forerunners of the permanent building societies for which the South Pennines is so famous.

7 Popular Education

Popular education for children grew out of an increasing Christian concern for the education of the children of the poor, which found expression first in the Sunday School movement of the late eighteenth century and then in the monitorial schools of the National and British and Foreign Schools Societies of the early nineteenth century. Before these developments took place, there were few educational opportunities open to poor children, the vast majority of whom were put to work either in the home or the factory as soon as they could be usefully employed. Such opportunities as existed ranged from the very basic grounding in reading and writing provided at low cost in the better dame schools to the predominantly classical education of the grammar schools, which often admitted free pupils of poor means. The statutes of the ancient grammar school of King James in Almondbury, for example, provided for the admission of poor children from the village without payment of fees, though they were 'obliged to get moss for the school, run and cleanse the desks, make the fires and sweep the school as often as occasion requires, without neglect of their learning'.

The first schools which set out to try to help the mass of the population were the Sunday Schools, which appear to have existed in the South Pennines even before Robert Raikes, the well-known publicist of the movement, founded his famous Sunday School at Gloucester in 1780. One is known to have existed at Mixenden as early as 1768 and at Great Horton by 1776. The Rev. Henry Venn wrote in 1779 of one he had founded at Huddersfield and his friend John Wesley, whose several visits to the South Pennines made such an impact on the life of its people, wrote in his journal in 1784: 'I preached this morning and afternoon at Bingley. . .before

the service I stepped into the Sunday School which contains 240 children. So many children in one parish are restrained from open sin and taught a little good manners as well as to read the Bible. I find these schools springing up wherever I go'.

In the climate of political radicalism of the 1790s, there were many who considered any kind of provision for the education of the poor to be socially dangerous, but the Sunday Schools survived and helped prepare public opinion for a general advance in elementary education, as Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth of Gawthorpe Hall, the architect of the state system of education, later acknowledged.

Because of the reluctance of some Sunday Schools, particularly the Wesleyans, to teach writing on the sabbath, some extended their activities to weekday evenings, but it was the monitorial schools of the early nineteenth century which were to provide the standard form of popular weekday education for the next half century. The monitorial system, by which one teacher taught a number of monitors who in turn taught their own groups of children, had been developed by the Rev. Andrew Bell, founder of the National Society, who was concerned principally with promoting Anglican doctrine, and the Quaker, Joseph Lancaster, founder of the British and Foreign School Society, who believed that religious education should be non-denominational. The system was simple and economical and spread quickly.

The Rev. Walter Smith, curate of Almondbury and headmaster of the grammar school, who had earlier opened up his school for use as a Sunday School, was instrumental in the founding of the Almondbury National School in 1818. Above the school entrance were inscribed words of George III: 'May every child in my kingdom



The Village School Luddenden

be able to read the Bible'. By 1828, fifty-one boys and thirty-five girls, who each paid threepence per week, were taught by two teachers. Local gentry often gave their support to the founding of new schools. Members of the Ferrand family were leading supporters of the Bingley National School, completed in 1814 and the Earl of Dartmouth laid the foundation stone in 1819 for the Huddersfield National School on a site rented from Sir John Ramsden for 'one red rose in the time of red roses if one be demanded'. There were, on the whole, fewer British and Foreign Schools founded in the area, but one opened at Honley in 1816 and Huddersfield in 1838. After 1833, the societies could apply to the government for financial assistance, but money still had to be found from local sources.

Local manufacturers often lent their support to local schools, particularly after the 1833 Factory Act required that every factory child should receive two hours' schooling a day. The Sugden brothers, staunch Methodist cotton spinners of Vale Mill at Oakworth in the Worth Valley, besides insisting that every employee attend Sunday worship, also insisted 'that every youth dependent upon those whom we employ, attend some Sunday or Day School, from the age of six upwards'. The Whitehead brothers built the Holly Mount School next to their cotton mill in Rawtenstall in 1839 and employees of the Dugdale family at Lowerhouse, near Burnley, attended the school at Habergham, founded by the Shuttleworths.



King James Grammar School, Almondbury

Local manufacturers and gentry also often gave financial support to Mechanics Institutes, though some were founded by the artisans themselves. Originating in early nineteenth century Glasgow under the inspiration of George Birkbeck, the son of a Settle merchant and banker, the movement spread to London and then took root in the provinces under the influence of Birkbeck's friend, Lord Henry Brougham.

In the 1820s, Mechanics Institutes, providing lectures in technical and scientific subjects, reading rooms and libraries, were founded at Ashton-under-Lyne, Dukinfield, Dewsbury, Halifax, Huddersfield, Keighley and Stalybridge and further institutes established at Bradford, Burnley and Bury

in the 1830s. In 1837, the Yorkshire Union of Mechanics Institutes was established.

The range of broadsheets and ballads, evangelical and temperance tracts, Owenite and political pamphlets and popular radical newspapers like Cobbett's *Weekly Political Register*, with a weekly circulation of between 20,000 and 30,000 and O'Connor's *Northern Star*, which achieved a peak weekly circulation of 50,000 in 1839, bore witness to the growing numbers of working men able to read during this period. Some, like Samuel Bamford of Middleton, and Benjamin Wilson of Halifax went on to write their autobiographies later in the century, though large numbers remained illiterate, able only to put their mark on the parish register when they married.

Sit down and study:

Suggestions for further reading and research.

Many of the local historical societies and adult education centres in which the region abounds organise lectures and workshop sessions and some groups have their own publications. There are rich resources for the study of local history in South Pennine public libraries and the county record offices at Preston and Wakefield. A useful guide to the range of primary sources available to the local historian is W.B. Stephens, *Sources for English Local History* (1973). Some of the variety of material for the study of social movements is illustrated in a number of anthologies of documents such as: G.D.H. Cole and A.W. Filson, *British Working Class Movements, 1789-1875* (1965); F.C. Mather, *Chartism and Society* (1980); E.R. Pike, *Human Documents of the Industrial Revolution in Britain* (1966) and J.T. Ward and W. Hamish Fraser, *Workers and Employers* (1980).

Asa Briggs, *The Age of Improvement, 1783-1867* (1959), John Stevenson, *Popular Disturbances in England, 1700-1870* (1979) and J.T. Ward, *Popular Movements, c. 1830-50* (1970) together deal with most aspects of the theme of this booklet and provide good introductory general reading and contain useful bibliographies. They can be supplemented by regional histories such as C. Aspin, *Lancashire, the First Industrial Society* (1969) and F. Singleton, *The Industrial Revolution in Yorkshire* (1970); local histories of South Pennine towns and villages and specialist studies of the various social movements themselves. *Pennine Magazine*, published bi-monthly, *The Local Historian*, published quarterly, and *Northern History*, published annually, often contain articles and reviews of interest to the local historian of the South Pennines.

Town and village histories: W. Bennett, *A History of Burnley, Vol. 3* (1948); R. Brook, *The Story of Huddersfield* (1968); E.E. Dodd, *Bingley* (1958); I. Dewhurst, *A History of Keighley* (1974); T.W. Hansen, *The Story of Old Halifax* (1920); M. Jagger, *A History of Honley* (1914); F. Singleton (et. al.), *The Saddleworth Story* (1964); E. Williams, *Holmfirth, from Forest to Township* (1975).

Specialist studies: A. Briggs (Ed.), *Chartist Studies* (1959); D. Bythell, *The Handloom Weavers* (1969); N.C. Edsall, *The Anti-Poor Law Movement, 1834-44* (1971); P.H.J.H. Gosden, *The Friendly Societies in England, 1815-75* (1960); J.O. Foster, *Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution* (1974); J.L. and B. Hammond, *The Skilled Labourer* (1919); R.G. Kirby and A.E. Musson, *The Voice of the People: John Doherty, 1798-1854, Trade Unionist, Radical and Factory Reformer* (1976); W. Laqueur, *Religion and Respectability: Sunday Schools and Working Class Culture, 1780-1850* (1976); R.J. Morris, *Class and Class Consciousness in the Industrial Revolution, 1780-1850* (1979); H.M. Pelling, *A History of British Trade Unions* (1963); E. Royle, *Chartism* (1980); M.I. Thomis, *The Luddites* (1970); M.I. Thomis and P. Holt, *Threats of Revolution in Britain, 1789-1848* (1977); D. Thompson, *The Early Chartists* (1971); E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963); M. Tylecote, *The Mechanics Institutes of Lancashire and Yorkshire before 1851* (1957); J.T. Ward, *Religion and Society in England, 1790-1850* (1972); D.G. Wright, *Democracy and Reform, 1815-85* (1970).



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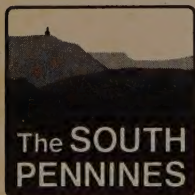
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Pennine Heritage Network

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Hebden Bridge, HX7 8DG.



ISBN 0 907613 04 7

045



W9-CFT-830